Attorney Docket No. 1422-0001
Customer Number 36291

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.)   Claim Status

Claims 1-30 and 32-37 are pending in the application. The claims have not been amended in this response. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

2.)   Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

In paragraphs 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 10-12, 14-23, 25, 27-30, 33, and 35-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Katsikas (US 6,868,498). The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Katiskas teaches a methodology for identifying specific users, and allowing these users to identify themselves using an Authorized Senders List (ASL). (Abstract, lines 1-6; col. 2, lines 13-20). Katiskas then rejects emails if the email address of the sender is not on the ASL. (Col. 2, lines 21-25). Thus, Katiskas is focused on an individual addressee in the domain which the ASL serves and provides a database of the authorized senders in that domain. This is completely different from the Applicant's claimed invention.

Instead of focusing on authorized individual users, the Applicant's e-mail server Registry specifically looks at the e-mail server/domain that is initiating the email. The e-mail server Registry stores information regarding all e-mail *servers and domains* authorized to send e-mail messages over the Internet. The Registry associates e-mail servers (server name and server IP address) to the domains which they host and keeps track of subscribing servers (associated by all three components: e-mail server name, e-mail IP address, and the domain, i.e., @domainname.com). Thus, the Applicant's Registry database focuses on the status of the sending e-mail server and the domains which it services, not individual users.

Regarding claims 1, 12, 22, 28, 33, and 37, the Examiner cites Katiskas's ASL for showing a central e-mail server registry database for storing information regarding all e-mail servers and domains authorized to send e-mail messages over the Internet. However, as noted above, Katiskas's ASL does not perform this function, but rather

Response - PAGE 11 of 14

identifies specific users authorized to send e-mails. Katsikas's ASL is unique to each email server or customer. Katiskas maintains an ASL for each user (i.e., you@domainname.com). The Applicant's central e-mail server Registry, on the other hand, is kept and maintained centrally and identifies *servers*, not users. The Registry defines e-mail servers and characteristics of domains (e.g., country code, industry code, and/or business class).

The Examiner then cites "the unique e-mail address of the user" as recited in Katiskas col. 2, lines 10-15, for showing means for the addressee to specify characteristics of domains that are authorized to send e-mail messages to the addressee. Once again, the Examiner has confused the *e-mail address of an individual user* with the recited *characteristics of domains* that are authorized to send e-mail messages to the addressee. There is no teaching or suggestion in Katiskas of a means for specifying characteristics of *domains* that are authorized to send e-mail messages to the addressee.

The Examiner then cites Katiskas, col. 4, lines 5-36 for showing means for an e-mail server serving the addressee to access information from the Registry database to determine whether the source domain possesses the specified characteristics. Again, this passage from Katiskas discusses filtering on the basis of individual sender addresses, not a means for determining whether the *source domain* possesses to the specified characteristics. The characteristics of the source domain, as recited in the dependent claims, include such characteristics as country code, industry code, and business class code, not the unique e-mail address of a user. The claimed invention does not perform user filtering.

Finally, the Examiner cites Katiskas col. 3, lines 21-56 for showing means for allowing delivery of the incoming e-mail message if the source domain possesses the specified characteristics, and for denying delivery of the incoming e-mail message if the source domain does not possess the specified characteristics. Again, this is incorrect because Katiskas uses e-mail addresses of specific users, not characteristics of *source domains* to make the delivery decision. The claimed invention does not use an ASL for user identification or generic black list interfaces.

Response - PAGE 12 of 14

To overcome a rejection under § 102, the Applicant must show that one of the claimed limitations is not disclosed by the cited reference. In the instant case, it is clear that *none* of the limitations are disclosed or suggested by Katiskas. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 102 rejection and the allowance of claims 1, 12, 22, 28, 33, and 37 are respectfully requested.

Regarding the remaining claims rejected under § 102, the Examiner continues his analysis comparing Katiskas's ASL with the Applicant's e-mail server Registry database. The error in this analysis has been discussed above, and need not be repeated here. For the reasons discussed above, the withdrawal of the § 102 rejection and the allowance of claims 1-4, 10-12, 14-23, 25, 27-30, 33, and 35-36 are respectfully requested.

3.)   Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In paragraphs 4-5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5-9, 13, 24, 26, 32, and 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsikas in view of Northington et al. (US 6,128,602). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the cited references must teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations of the rejected claims. (MPEP 2143). As noted above, it is clear that *none* of the claimed limitations in the Applicant's independent claims are disclosed or suggested by Katiskas. The addition of Northington does not overcome the shortcomings of Katsikas. Northington discloses the use of an industry identifying code (SIC or other) and country codes. However, these codes are utilized in the context of a financial system and have no functional correlation to the claimed invention. Additionally, Northington is addressing individual account holders' information, not servers as claimed by the Applicant.

Thus, the combination of Katiskas and Northington does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the Applicant's independent claims. Claims 5-9, 13, 24, 26, 32, and 34 are dependent claims, which recite additional limitations in combination with the novel limitations of the independent claims. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection and the allowance of claims 5-9, 13, 24, 26, 32, and 34 are respectfully requested.

Response - PAGE 13 of 14
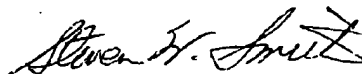
4.) Prior Art Not Relied Upon

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to the Applicants' disclosure. However, the Applicant's reading of these references has not revealed any teaching or suggestion of the claimed invention.

5.) Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-30 and 32-37.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 24, 2008

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Response - PAGE 14 of 14